SOAPS: Rhetorical Analysis of a Reading Source

**What it is:** A reading technique that explores how a writer attempts to persuade an audience.

**What it does:** Helps to analyze both the text and the persuasive means by which the speaker makes an argument.

### SOAPS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>What is the subject of the piece? What theme or big idea do you see?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>Occasion</td>
<td>What event or occasion do you think caused the author to write this piece?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Audience</td>
<td>To whom is the author writing? How do you know?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td>What does the author want you to believe or understand? Evidence to support this?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>Speaker</td>
<td>What do we know about the speaker? How does this information inform their opinion?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After taking notes on the SOAPS (above)

**Explore how the author uses persuasive appeals**

- **Ethos = author’s authority/credibility**
  - extrinsic: character/expertise/education/experience of the speaker
  - intrinsic: how the writer writes or speaks
- **Logos = logic/evidence**
  - facts
  - statistics
  - expert testimony
- **Pathos = appeals to emotions**
  - love
  - pity
  - anger
  - and many more

Take notes on specific instances of these three persuasive appeals in the text.